

II. Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1 - 29 (CANCELLED)

Claim 30 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An assembly of collinearly aligned sections of large diameter corrugated plastic pipes that are buried in a trench [,-wherein] comprising a plurality of separate lengths of [pipe are] connected pipes [,] wherein: A) the end of a first pipe length abuts the end of a second pipe length, and each pipe length includes a flange radially extending from the abutting ends of the [adjacent] pipe lengths, [wherein] and each [end] flange radially extends from the valley of the corrugation in the pipe immediately preceding the end and does not transversely extend into a crest, and B) a circumferential clamp is disposed about the abutting flanges to form a joint between the pipe lengths, the clamp having sides adapted to embrace the sides of the flanges and the sides of the clamp do not radially extend to the valleys of the corrugations in the pipes immediately adjacent the flanges.

Claim 31 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An assembly of collinearly aligned sections of large diameter corrugated plastic pipes that are buried in a trench [,-wherein] comprising a plurality of separate lengths of [pipe are] connected pipes, wherein: A) the end of a first pipe length [abuts] faces the end[s] of a second pipe length, and 1) each pipe length includes a flange radially extending from each facing end of the pipe [~~the abutting ends of adjacent pipe ends, wherein~~] and 2) each flange is formed from a circumferential portion of an end corrugation of the pipe and extends radially

[extends] from the valley of the corrugation in the pipe immediately preceding the end and the end portion of the flange does not substantially extend along or parallel to the pipe length[.] :

- B) a circumferential clamp is disposed about the [abutting] facing flanges to form a joint between the pipe lengths, the clamp having sides adapted to embrace the sides of the flanges and the sides of the clamp do not radially extend to the valleys of the corrugations in the pipes immediately adjacent the flanges, [the clamp having an interior channel providing an inside clearance between the inside radius of the clamp and the outer circumference of the flanges, wherein]; and
- C) a gasket is interposed between the flanged ends of the pipe lengths [in a relationship in which the clamp encompasses the facing flanges].

Claim 32 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The assembly of claim 30 in which the clamp includes an interior channel providing an inside clearance between the inside radius of the clamp and the sides of the flanges.

Claim 33 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The assembly of claim 31 in which the gasket, in longitudinal cross section, has a shape essentially in correspondence with the facing flanges of pipe lengths.

Claim 34 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The assembly of claim 31 in which the gasket, in longitudinal cross section, is wedge shaped.

Claim 35 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The assembly of claim 31 in which the gasket comprises [and] an "O" ring.

Claim 36 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The assembly of claim 30 or 31 in which the clamp provides a compressive force to the flanges and the relationship of the clamp and the flanges is such that the diameters of the clamp and the flanges, when the clamp is tightened, provide a) a clearance between the outside circumference of the flanges and the inside circumference of [the channel formed in] the clamp and b) a clearance between the sides of the [channel in the] clamp and the valleys of the corrugations in the pipes immediately adjacent the flanges.

Claim 37 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The assembly of claim 36 in which the sides of the clamp form [the] a channel and the channel includes opposite sides extending radially [extending] toward each other from the inside radius of the clamp.

Claim 38 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The assembly of claim 36 in which the sides of the clamp form [the] a channel and the channel includes opposite sides radially extending away from each other from the inside radius of the clamp.

Claim 39 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The assembly of claim 30 or 31 in which the inside diameter of the circumference of the clamp is greater than the outside diameters of the [lengths] flanges joined.

Claim 40 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The assembly of claim 30 or 31 in which the pipe lengths [are lined with] include a plastic liner and [at least] a portion of the flange is formed [intrinsically] from the material of the liner.

Claim 41 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A system for joining collinearly aligned sections of large diameter corrugated plastic pipes comprising: forming a circumferential flange integrally and radially extending from the valley of the corrugation at the end of a first pipe section, forming a circumferential flange integrally and radially extending from the valley of the corrugation at the end of a second pipe section such that the end portion of the flange does not substantially extend along or parallel to the pipe length; positioning the flange at the end of the first pipe section in a facing [an abutting] relationship with the flange at the end of the second pipe section, joining the [abutting] facing flanges with a circumferential clamp having sides that do not radially extend to the valleys of the corrugations in the pipes immediately adjacent the flanges, the clamp having an interior channel providing an inside clearance between the inside radius of the clamp and the outer circumference of the flanges, and burying the pipe sections in a trench.

Claim 42 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for joining collinearly aligned sections of large diameter corrugated plastic pipes comprising: forming a circumferential flange integrally and radially extending from the valley of the corrugation at the end of a first pipe section such that the end portion of the flange does not substantially extend along or parallel to the pipe length, forming a circumferential flange integrally and

radially extending from the valley of the corrugation at the end of a second pipe section such that the end portion of the flange does not substantially extend along or parallel to the pipe length, positioning the flange at the end of the first pipe section in a facing [an abutting] relationship with the flange at the end of the second pipe section, and joining the facing [abutting] flanges with a circumferential clamp having sides that do not radially extend to the valleys of the corrugations in the pipes immediately adjacent the flanges, [the clamp having an interior channel providing an inside clearance between the inside radius of the clamp and the outer circumference of the flanges,] and burying the pipe sections in a trench.

Claim 43 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 42, including inserting a gasket in alignment with the flanges as the flanges are positioned in the [abutting] facing relationship, and wherein applying the clamp compresses the assembly of the gasket and flanges[,-] and the clamp allows [allowing] an internal radial clearance [with respect to] between the clamp and the outside circumference of the flanges.

Claim 44 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 42 wherein the pipe sections [are lined with] include a liner.

Claim 45 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A kit of collinearly aligned sections of large diameter corrugated plastic pipes provided in predetermined lengths that are to be buried in a trench in which 1) a plurality of separate lengths of pipe are connected to each other or 2) a length of pipe is connected to a fitting, comprising a first large diameter

corrugated plastic pipe having a flange radially extending from the valley of the corrugation in the pipe immediately preceding the end of the pipe such that the end portion of the flange does not substantially extend along or parallel to the pipe length, and a second large diameter corrugated plastic pipe or fitting having a flange [radially extending from the valley of the corrugation in the pipe or fitting] immediately preceding the end of the pipe or fitting, the flanges adapted to abut one another in facing relationship, a peripheral clamp for disposition about the abutting flanges to form a joint between 1) the pipe lengths [an /] or the pipe length and the fitting, the clamp having sides adapted to embrace the sides of the flanges and the sides of the clamp do not radially extend to the valleys of the corrugations in the pipes or pipe and fitting immediately adjacent the flange when the clamp is disposed about the flanges [the clamp having an interior channel providing an inside clearance between the inside radius of the clamp and the outer circumference of the flanges, when the clamp is disposed about the flanges].

Claim 46 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The kit of claim 45 [~~for providing a water-tight joint between the joint components~~] in which at least one pipe length or fitting includes a compressible annular elastomeric gasket having a surface profile essentially corresponding to the surface area of the pipe's [~~length's~~] or the fitting's flange.

Claim 47 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The kit of claim 46 in which the gasket is an "O" ring having first and second side surfaces for disposition between the flanges and the

surfaces of the "O" ring facing the flanges correspond to the surfaces of the flanges at the pipe or fitting ends.

Claim 48 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The kit of claim 45, claim 46, or claim 47 including a field cut length of pipe.

Claim 49 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The assembly of claim 30 or 31 in which the pipe is an HDPE pipe.

Claim 50 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The assembly of claim 30 or claim 31 in which the clamp is formed from a stainless steel.

Claim 51 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system of claim 41 in which the pipe sections are [of] formed from HDPE.

Claim 52 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 42 for joining HDPE corrugated plastic pipe.

Claim 53 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The kit of claim 45 in which the first pipe is an HDPE pipe.

Claim 54 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The kit of claim 53 in which the clamp is formed from a stainless steel.

Claim 55 (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 42 in which the forming of the flanges of the first and second pipe sections [are formed by] includes cutting the sections from a given length of pipe at a longitudinal location between the valley of the end corrugation of the given length of pipe and the crest of the end corrugation.

Claim 56 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The assembly of claim 30 or 31 in which an additional length of pipe having a flanged end is disposed in facing relationship with a fitting having a cooperative flange and an additional clamp is disposed about the flanged end of the additional pipe and the flange of the fitting to form a joint.

Claim 57 (ORIGINALLY PRESENTED) The kit of claim 45 further including a second fitting having a flanged end cooperative with a flange at an end of an additional pipe and a second clamp for disposition with respect to the flange of the second fitting and the flange of the additional pipe.

Claim 58 (NEW) The system of claim 41 including positioning a gasket in alignment with and between the facing flanges before the flanges are joined by the clamp.